Australian Bureau of Statistics

6310.0 - Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia, Aug 1997

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Earnings increase, more workers in casual jobs and decline in trade union memberships continues

Average weekly earnings increased by 10 per cent and the proportion of casual employees increased by 2 per cent in the two years ending August 1997, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Results from the survey **Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia** show the average weekly earnings of full-time employees in August 1997 was $752 for males and $606 for females. Average weekly earnings of part-time employees in August 1997 were $254 for males and $264 for females.

Average weekly earnings for both full-time and part-time employees increased 11 per cent respectively, between August 1995 and 1997. Average weekly earnings for full-time employees increased from $630 in August 1995 to $702 in August 1997 and for part-time employees from $236 to $261 respectively.

The number of employees in Australia has increased from 6.1 million in August 1988 to 7.0 million in August 1997, of which almost three quarters (5,055,800) were full-time employees in their main job. Just over half (55 per cent) of female employees and the majority of male employees (87 per cent) worked full-time in their main job. The proportion of casual employees increased from 19 per cent in August 1988 to 24 per cent in 1995 and 26 per cent in 1997.

The number of part-time employees has increased by almost 70 per cent since August 1988 from 1,129,300 to 1,916,400 in August 1997. Nearly three quarters (1,412,400) of part-time employees were female in August 1997.

The number of public sector employees decreased 8 per cent (135,400) in the two years ending August 1997, while the number of private sector employees rose by 4 per cent (225,400).

In August 1997, full-time employees who were residents of Tasmania had the lowest average weekly earnings across all states and territories at $624, while the Australian Capital Territory recorded the highest at $812. Full-time employees in South Australia, Queensland and Victoria had the next lowest average weekly earnings at $658, $671 and $695 respectively, while New South Wales, Western Australia and the Northern Territory had the next highest at $726, $722 and $711.

In August 1997, 98 per cent of the 5,055,800 full-time employees received one or more of the 'standard' employment benefits in their main job (superannuation, sick leave, holiday leave or long service leave).

The number of trade union members decreased 3 per cent in the two years ending August 1997. The number of employees reporting trade union membership fell from 42 per cent (2,535,900) in

August 1988 to 33 per cent (2,251,800) in August 1995, and to 30 per cent (2,110,300) in August 1997.

Copies of the publication **Weekly Earnings of Employees (Distribution), Australia, August 1997** (cat. no. 6310.0) are available from ABS Bookshops.

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